

*Stated Meeting, January 15, 1869.*

Present, ten members.

JOHN C. CRESSON, Vice-President, in the Chair.

Letters of acknowledgment were received from the Society of Emulation of Abbeville and the Royal Institution.

Letters of envoi were received from the Meteorological Office of the Royal Society, and from the Society of Physical and Natural Sciences at Bordeaux, requesting an exchange of publications, which was referred to the Secretaries with power to act.

A request for the loan of Mariana's History of Spain for six months from President Coppée, was referred to the Library Committee with power to act.

A copy of No. 80 of the Proceedings, just published, was laid on the table by the Secretaries.

Donations for the Library were received from M. Foucou, Mr. O. Warner, Sec'y Com. Massachusetts, Dr. B. A. Gould, Mr. S. Scudder, Boston Public Library, New Jersey Historical Society, Dr. Joseph Parrish, the Blind Asylum, Medical News, Librarian of Congress, Treasury Department, and Dr. Rushenberger.

The death of C. F. P. von Martius, at Munich, December 13, 1868, was announced by letter from his son, Dr. C. A. Martius.

The death of John Cassin, at Philadelphia, January 10, 1869, aged 55, was announced by Dr. Le Conte, and on motion of Dr. Rushenberger, Dr. Bridges was requested to prepare an obituary notice of the deceased.

The following communication was received from Prof. T. C. Porter, dated, Easton, Pa., Jan. 6, 1869.

Mr. Boyd's letter has arrived, and the following extracts contain all the information he can now give concerning the Indian inscriptions near Peach Bottom :

“The rocks from which I copied the figures sent you are granitic, very

hard, and situated in the Susquehanna River about three miles below the Pennsylvania State-line and twelve or fourteen above Havre de Grace. During high freshets they are entirely submerged.

The inscriptions are numerous and in a fine state of preservation when not directly exposed to the abrading force of ice and drift-wood. They occur on the sides and tops of some half dozen rocks. Although at first sight they might seem to have no connection with each other, I have been able to trace an arrangement in horizontal and vertical lines. The grooves are semi-cylindric, and in some cases have a depth of half an inch or more.

My copies were taken by placing sheets of paper on the figures and coloring the portions lying immediately over the grooves. Thus, the outlines, if rude, are faithful and of full size.

Owing to the limited time at my command, I did not copy them all, but confined myself to the more curious.

The people of the neighborhood, although many of them are descended from early settlers who came into contact with the Indians then living there, seem to know nothing as to the origin or meaning of these figures.

I regret that the information I send you is so scanty, but, should the Philosophical Society desire it, it will give me great pleasure to make a thorough exploration of the rocks and their inscriptions, next July, when I expect to spend several weeks not far from the locality."

Dr. Brinton, present on invitation, addressed the Society upon the nature of the Maya group of languages, and, in his opinion, the great value of several manuscript grammars and vocabularies in the Society's Library. On motion of Mr. Fraley, the thanks of the Society were tendered to Dr. Brinton, and he was requested to furnish the Secretaries with an abstract of his remarks.

The Maya group of languages comprises those spoken in the old departments of Yucatan, Vera Paz, Chiapas, Guatemala, and Soconusco. The Huasteca also belongs to it, which was current in the province of Tamaulipas, about Tampico. The Natchez of Louisiana, and the Chahta-Muskoki family display some affinities with it, which have not yet been fully investigated. On the ethnological maps of Pritchard, Waitz, Bastian and Kiepert, and others, the Mayas are located on the Greater Antilles also, and it is the opinion of the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, as well as some other writers, both ancient and modern, that the Mayas and Aztecs both look to the former inhabitants of Haiti—the so called Taini—as their common progenitors. For this opinion there is no sound foundation, as there can be brought abundant evidence to prove that both

the tribes native in Cuba and Haiti, as well as those on the Bahamas, and those resident on the lesser Antilles before the arrival of the Caribs were Arrowacks, and came from South America.

The most important dialects of the Maya are the Yucatecan, the Quiche, the Cakchiquel, the Tzendal, the Pokonchi, the Huastecan and the Zahlopahkap. They are as closely allied one with another as the Romanic tongues of modern Europe, and have many points in common which give them peculiar interest, in fact the very highest interest, among American aboriginal languages.

Not merely were they the dialects of the most cultivated branch of all the red race, from which indeed the civilization of the whole Northern Continent probably proceeded, but they exhibit certain linguistic traits, allying them strangely to the more perfected tongues of the Old World. So strong are these resemblances that of recent writers Brasseur and Bastian both incline to hold them akin to the Aryan family, and possibly largely influenced by Scandinavian immigration in the eleventh century. This however is a baseless hypothesis.

The traits referred to are : 1st. Their less marked polysynthetic structure, approaching at times to a plainly inflectional character ; 2d. Their harmonic repetition of vowels like that in Scythian tongues, the suffixes added to change the grammatical character of words often varying their vowel to agree with that in the terminal syllable of the root ; 3rd. The pronominal affixes of the verbs, which are added to the verbal root to express the relation of the action, and form a regular conjugation precisely as was the case in the primitive Aryan tongue ; 4th. The genesis of the pronouns, which as recently carefully investigated by M. H. de Charency has disclosed laws of growth of very general interest.

In these languages also, is found the only native American literature. The Mayas used a phonetic alphabet as well as ideographic writing, and thus preserved their chronicles and traditions for many centuries anterior to the discovery. At the Conquest, their chief literary monument, called the Book of the Mats (*i. e.* of the nobles, who sat on mats while the common people occupied the floors), the Popol Vuh, was written in Roman Characters in the Quiche dialect. This with several other similar works has been published in the original and with translations in Spanish and French.

As the Maya group may thus be considered the key to the civilization, the mythology, the literature, and earliest possible history of the red race, it is most desirable that any valuable manuscripts which throw light upon it shall be published. Two such exist in the Library of the American Philosophical Society, both short, both of the highest value, both unique and entirely unknown to scholars. One of these is a grammar covering 54 small 4to pages of the Cakchiquel dialect, the other still shorter, embraced on 32 small pages, and is the only existing grammar of the Chol or Putum dialect, spoken by the Lacandones, among the mountains of Vera

Paz. The former dates from 1692, and the author is unknown; the latter is a copy of the grammar of the Dominican missionary Francisco Moran, and is dated 1695. It is in duplicate, by different hands, and as the only known work on the Chol, deserves by all means to be placed within the reach of linguists. A quite full vocabulary is appended, and a sufficient number of prayers and dialogues in the dialect to allow a very satisfactory exhibit to be made of the whole structure of the dialect.

The longer Cakchiquel grammar could likewise be rendered extremely useful by the proper use of other manuscripts in that dialect now in possession of the Society, and which have not hitherto been used. These include several dictionaries, books of sermons, Confessionaries, and a copy of the earliest volume printed in any Central American dialect, the *Doctrina Christiana* of Marroquin, printed at Mexico, 1556.

The enlightened attention which this Society has always given to American linguistics, and the great benefit which the publication of these two small works, enriched by the notes and illustrations for which the Society's Library offers such abundant material, lead me to hope that your honored body will take the necessary steps to render them thus available to the learned world.

Mr. Lesley was nominated and elected Librarian for the ensuing year.

The Standing Committees were chosen for the ensuing year as follows:

*Finance*—Mr. Fraley, Mr. J. F. James, Mr. Marsh.

*Publication*—Mr. T. P. James, Dr. Carson, Prof. C. B. Trego, Mr. E. K. Price, Mr. Tilghman.

*Hall*—Mr. Peale, Mr. P. E. Chase, Mr. S. W. Roberts.

*Library*—Dr. Bell, Dr. Coates, Mr. Price, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Briggs.

The list of surviving members was read.

On the list, January 1, 1868, U. S. 281, Foreign, 142—423.

Elected in 1868, U. S. 10, Foreign, 1—11.

Deceased in 1868, U. S. 11, Foreign, 5—16.

On the list, January 1, 1869, U. S. 280, Foreign, 138—418.

Nominations Nos. 593—621 were read and spoken to.

The Committee on the Michaux Legacy reported a resolution for empowering M. Carlier of Paris, which was adopted.

New nominations Nos. 622, 623 were read.

The Publication Committee reported a recommendation to

send the second series of the Transactions, complete, to the N. H. S. of Montreal, which was so ordered.

The ballot boxes were then opened by the presiding officer, and the following named gentlemen were declared duly elected members of the Society.

George H. Horne, M. D., of Philadelphia.

William M. Gabb, of Philadelphia.

Hakakian B y, of Cairo.

Linant Bey, of Cairo.

Auguste Mariette Bey, of Cairo.

Dr. Ceselli, of Rome.

Emmanuel De Roug , of Paris.

Henri Brugsch.

Johannes D michen.

Fran ois Chabas, of Chalons sur S one.

Samuel Birch, of London.

Edward Lart t, of Paris.

Joseph Prestwich, of London.

Carl L. R itimeyer, of Basel.

William H. Flower, of London.

George Rolleston, of Oxford.

Thomas H. Huxley, of London.

Joseph D. Hooker, M. D., of Kew Gardens.

John Phillips, of Oxford.

J. J. A. Worsaae, of Copenhagen.

Sven Nilsson, of Lund.

Auguste Carlier, of Paris.

Benjamin S. Lyman, of Philadelphia.

Henry C. Baird, of Philadelphia.

Samuel J. Reeves, of Philadelphia.

Hector Tyndale, of Philadelphia.

Joshua B. Lippincott, of Philadelphia.

Horace Binney, Jr., of Philadelphia.

William Blackmore, of Salisbury (London) England.

And the Society was adjourned.